

Disclaimer: It's JKR's world not mine, and while I would like the money and a few other details changed from canon I don't care all that much at this point.

A/N: This story will be my contribution to the Azkaban!Harry genre, sit back and enjoy the ride.

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Azkaban prison had changed much in the past two years, ever since Harry Potter had been condemned to the life inside the wall of the once formidable prison things had been changing. The Dark Lord had broken many of his faithful out, but he dared not try to kill his greatest enemy as word had leaked out long ago that something, was killing the dementors and it all seemed to center on one prisoner.

Harry glanced out of his barred windows and smirked, true the dementors had at one time been his greatest weakness but if Azkaban forced an individual witch or wizard to do anything, it was to force them into a fight for survival by any means necessary.

Within weeks of his farce of a trial for underage magic things began to shift in his mind, initially the dementors had continued to terrorize him, but the one day it had happened. Magic, accidental magic never occurred at Azkaban for the simple reason that never had someone of Harry's age been subjected to its not so tender mercies. His magic had lashed out at a group of five dementors and in that moment, Harry understood that regardless of who had cared for him outside of the prison, all he truly had was himself at this point.

After three months in Azkaban, Fudge made his first appearance to gloat about the fact.

The plump man with the bowler hat strolled towards Harry's cell with a spring in his step and a smile in his heart. Ever since the boy had been silenced he had suffered no political resistance in instituting all of his policies at Hogwarts, and Delores had reported overwhelming success. There had been a few murmurs of dementors dying at Azkaban, and he figured it was time to investigate them as a thinly veiled opportunity to torment the boy who had sought to destabilize his carefully instructed world with mere words.

"Ah, Harry how are the facilities meeting your approval?" Fudge asked jovially looking at the shaggy bedraggled boy, hoping for the madness of the typical Azkaban prisoner.

Harry merely smiled at the minister, "I'm surviving Minister Fudge."

Fudge's disappointment shone on his face, he had so hoped for an insane Harry Potter, "Well then, I suppose it's time for more dementors to be sent over to your block of the prison, isn't it?"

Harry smirked as the warden coughed to get the Minister's attention, "Err, sir you have received my reports of Dementor deaths, correct?"

Fudge turned to the man blustering, "Nonsense, nothing can kill a Dementor."

Harry spoke up, "Fuudge." He drawled teasingly, "You'll soon find that I specialize in the impossible. As soon as you find out that Voldemort has returned that will be something else impossible I told you about. Of course, by then it will be too late for you. Not very smart for a politician are you? Never put all of your eggs in one basket."

Fudge fought to regain his bluster and demanded, "Cut the rations for this prisoner, and I expect you to return the dementors to this block when the prisoner has been weakened sufficiently."

The Warden shrugged helplessly, "Minister, we haven't even fed the prisoner since he's arrived, a house elf of some sort keeps bringing him food daily, and you know we don't have the wards to block house elf arrivals or departures save if they try to take a prisoner with them."

Fudge removed his bowler hat and rung it in frustration before he snarled, "Well, if Azkaban seems to be treating you so well then I guess we'll have to make sure you stay here, won't we Mr. Potter?"

Harry shrugged unconcernedly, "I'll leave when I'm ready to, and no sooner or later. I suspect by then you'll either be dead or completely irrelevant."

Fudge had nothing to say to that and stomped off, nothing had went like he had expected it to, and he didn't know enough about magic to do anything about it.

Harry smirked and glanced down at the watch that doobby had brought him months ago, it was simple enough that magic didn't really effect it, and it gave him a way to countdown to his escape from Azkaban, but not as a prisoner, but rather as a free wizard.

He better understood his own magic now than any other witch or wizard alive, he understood that by sheer application of will he could make his magic do his bidding, and he understood how the magical world worked now, better than he had ever expected. So many inconsistencies began to finally add up during his time in Azkaban, and his list of people he would give a chance to trust again had been winnowed down to four.

Under cloak and shadow a few weeks ago The recently appointed minister Rufus Scrimgeour had come to his cell with a complete pardon and a promise to magically expunge the conviction from his record, it was the best Harry could hope to get from the corrupt ministry. Not an apology or an admittance of wrongdoing, but rather swept under the rug.

Apparently there had been some sort of a battle over a prophecy at the ministry and while the dark lord had been thwarted he had left a swath of destruction that had taken months to sort out. The minister had arranged for a time to listen to the prophecy once Harry was free and cleaned up a bit.

Harry knew he should feel elation that he could see his friends and surrogate family soon, but aside from Sirius and perhaps Ron and Hermione he had no desire to see any of them again. They had allowed him to be sent here because they were scared of being exposed as opposition to the ministry, he was a casualty to a war he had been told he couldn't fight in, and while he had no real proof seeing the look on Dumbledore's face when he had been convicted had left him with unease about the old headmaster.

As he gazed out into relatively calm night on the North Sea, Harry made plans to prevent another betrayal, one Minister had been quite enough, he wouldn't allow this Scrimgeour to do something similar under the guise of being helpful.

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Harry sat in the comfortable chair in a muggle hotel well away from the ministry, the shower he had taken had become a marathon as he washed dirt away from places he wasn't even aware existed. He still didn't need to shave, and if Sirius' stories about his father were true it might never be a chore he had to deal with. Looking into a mirror, Harry realized that while somewhat haggard looking he could still probably pass for being 17 or 18 as he was now. He supposed the years of hard living at the Dursleys had somewhat prepared him for a tame version of Azkaban.

A specific knock on the door signified his visitor was there and Harry used his repatriated wand to open the door.

Rufus Scrimgeour limped into the room carrying a prophecy orb in his hand, as minister he had access to prophecies in a way that the general public could not. He could transport the orbs but unless it involved him he couldn't listen to it unless it was like now and he used one of the parties of prophecy to listen in.

Harry merely calmly regarded the man, "Hello Minister, shall we got on with this so I can leave this accursed country once and for all."

Scrimgeour winced but nodded as he sat down in the chair next to Potter's. "All you need to do is tap your wand to the orb and it will open and be played. You've received all of your documentation, and the letters you wrote were hand delivered to the parties you requested. Also, the goblins have transferred all of your vaults to the Gnomes of Switzerland as you requested, and they have also retrieved the sword of Gryffindor from Dumbledore's office, and placed it in your vault as a weapon of conquest. Apparently, you had an outstanding magical claim on the object due to your actions in slaying a basilisk of some sort."

Harry merely nodded, he felt no desire to share any more of his past with the man, and he merely tapped the orb with his wand, snorting when an ethereal image of Trelawney escaped the confines of the orb.

"The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches ... Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh

month dies ... And the Dark Lord will mark him as equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not ... And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives."

~ OOTPCCh. 37, J.K Rowling

Harry smirked as the prophecy confirmed what he had suspected ever since the graveyard incident two years earlier. Scrimgeour on the other hand looked faintly nauseous when the implication of the prophecy settled in, he had provided the prophesized vanquisher of the dark lord with a get out of jail free pass, and all of the means to leave the country.

He weakly tried, "Well then Mr. Potter, I suppose I can't call upon your Gryffindor sensibilities to remain and finish the fight out?"

Harry merely shook his head, "You people of the magical world, I find your utter lack of a backbone hilarious."

Scrimgeour glowered as Harry continued undeterred, "How many of you proscribe to prophecy's role in your own lives? But, as soon as a prophecy absolves you of your own responsibilities you jump right in and are willing to believe the word of Sybill Trelawney. You all have the power necessary to defeat Voldemort, and for once I refuse to do it for you. Ask Dumbledore, he knows more about Voldemort than any other wizard alive, maybe between the two of you a plan of some sort can be formed, oh you know because you two are the highest magical authorities in this country."

Scrimgeour scowled but nodded, he supposed he could try to force Potter to comply, but then again he had already been to Azkaban and had weathered the experience with nary a scratch. Additionally, the boy seemed to be more magically powerful than his own aids had suggested he would be.

Scrimgeour left without another word, and Harry finished packing before he disappeared on his won steam, he would await response from his friends and family from a safe place, this place was far too exposed.

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Dumbledore couldn't believe his ears, for nearly two years his authority had been curtailed, he had even been driven from Hogwarts for a scant few weeks nearly a year ago, and yet now that he had all of his authority back he felt the world crashing down around his head.

Rufus Scrimgeour had just met him in his office and disclosed his dealings with Harry Potter, there were some uncomfortable questions to be discussed about a certain prophecy and while he felt some relief in working with a somewhat competent minister, he also felt panic knowing what he did of Harry and Voldemort.

His carefully laid plans had been destroyed when Delores Umbridge had sent Dementors to Little Whinging. His defense of Harry had failed, and his weapon, his tool of destiny had been lost to him. Dumbledore himself never would have been held inside the walls of Azkaban, but breaking someone else out was an entirely different kettle of fish. He lacked both the will and the desire to cause destruction that Tom had when he had broken his own inner circle out of the prison over a year earlier.

Now he was confronted with proof and while Scrimgeour told him of the letters Harry had sent off, Dumbledore saw his chance, his single chance to reassert some control over the situation. As it stood now he was painfully aware that Voldemort's supporters littered the ministry, just waiting for Scrimgeour to fall before a puppet government could take hold. Even Severus, the man he once thought his most loyal ally had returned to his true master and it had been a devastating blow for the Order of the Phoenix. While none yet had been killed, he had needed to completely restructure the organization and place several Fidelius protected safe houses throughout the country.

Dumbledore stood at the end of the meeting and gazed into the man's eyes, "I will see what I can do in regards to young Mr. Potter, if my attempts fail then we shall need to regroup to a position of strength before the ministry falls to consolidate in one place." Scrimgeour grunted his acknowledgement and left through the Floo, Dumbledore quickly summoned Fawkes and disappeared to Grimmauld Place, hopeful he was not too late.

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Hermione Granger was not a happy young woman; in fact she had not been happy for a very long time, two years in fact when her summer before fifth year became a nightmare in all respects. First, Harry had been found guilty of the bogus charges and her pleas for help from the headmaster in aiding her friend were all but ignored, in fact aside from her presence at Grimmauld Place, she had been completely ignored by nearly everyone, save for Remus and Sirius.

Ron had become an insufferable prat, he had also been given the Prefect position, which in and of itself had led her to resign her commission, without Harry around she no longer had to put up with the oaf's constant requests that she do all of his school work, and she could already tell her Prefect position would be much the same. McGonagall had been displeased, but more at Dumbledore than herself, and that had been the last real time she hadn't been ignored for nearly two years.

In some ways it was better, not having to deal with the corruption of nearly every individual in the magical world, and she merely did her class work and learned all she could in hopes to eventually help Harry. Even the Weasleys who had been warm to her for so long ignored her, as if she wasn't worth the bother without Harry around to demand her presence.

Now nearly two years had passed and she felt genuine excitement when she had received the hand written letter from her friend. The letter had chastised her for not writing him in the summer before fifth year, but then had forgiven her, and expressed a desire to spend some time with her over the coming summer. He had given her a muggle cell phone number that he claimed was completely unknown, and requested she get a hold of him sometime before July. She had burned the letter as requested, and used her fledgling Occlumency skills to masquerade the memory.

She was counting down the hours until she could leave Grimmauld Place, it had after all been a long school year, and now that she was waiting for an Order escort to her parent's home she pondered the thought of leaving Britain, a desire her own parent's had expressed openly once she had come clean about Voldemort and his army of followers.

She sat at the dining room table sipping on tea and reading a book on magical wildlife reserves when the Headmaster flashed into the

room using his phoenix. He spotted her immediately and asked, "Ah, Ms. Granger I was wondering if you would be willing to show me the letter Mr. Potter had delivered to you?"

Hermione merely shrugged, "I'm sorry sir Harry must have placed some sort of time delayed burning charm on it, because about ten minutes after I read the letter it burst into flames." Dumbledore did a surface scan of the girl's memories and the story seemed to check out so he withdrew and begged her forgiveness as he searched for the others who had letters delivered to them.

Remus and Sirius had given the same stories and they seemed to check out also, he finally found success as he found Ronald and the boy merely handed his letter over after Molly had brow beaten him into doing it.

Ron,

Hey mate, long time no write. Azkaban was no fun, but dealing with Snape and Malfoy probably would have been worse over the course of two years.

I've decided that Britain and its problems no longer concern me. I've already sent a message to Voldemort telling him if he constrains his violence and terror to the borders of Britain then he need not fear any direct action from me. That might seem to be cold hearted or gutless to you Ron, but I've dealt with the corruption, avarice, greed, and lust for power that permeates the ministry and I want no part of it.

This letter is the lifeline I leave to you, should you desire to have it. If you and your family want to leave Britain and start anew I will arrange it, all you need to do is go to the ministry and ask for a meeting with Scrimgeour in the next two weeks, he can do the rest of the work.

I hope to see you soon, but if I don't I hope you and your family safety through the war that is coming.

Your friend,

Harry



Molly continued brow beating her son, "When the headmaster asks you to do something, you do it young man."

Ron growled and stomped up to his room, he could understand why all of his older sibling got away from his mother as soon as they could. He didn't care what the headmaster wanted any more, he missed his friend and he was going to see him again.

Dumbledore silently cursed all of the deities in the world as he read the letter; the only man with a means of communicating the boy was the Minister of Magic, a man who it was nearly impossible to get close enough to brazenly search his mind for a variety of reasons. Also, Albus wasn't stupid enough to think that this worldlier and less trusting version of Harry Potter hadn't built contingencies into any plan he made. From the spoken and unspoken messages in the letter, Albus began to make plans that didn't include Harry Potter in the eventual downfall of Lord Voldemort. The boy's status as a horcrux would be discovered sooner as opposed to later, and there were ways to deal with the soul pieces beyond what Dumbledore wanted to consider.

Simply put, there were ways other than taking a killing curse from Lord Voldemort for Harry to lose the piece of soul. Albus was always planning and if this was a huge setback to his ever evolving plans he didn't let it show.

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Harry looked out in the great expanse of land he now owned on the Northern coastline of Australia, it had amused him to no end to discover that the creature muggles knew as the Tasmanian devil actually had a magical cousin that acted much like the classic cartoon had suggested. He presently owned the land holding the largest reserve of those creatures in the world, and with simple application of wards the creatures could only destroy a minimal amount of terrain while they spun around like whirling dervishes.

The local Aboriginal tribes and the few Torres Strait Islanders that moved into and out of the area seemed to have no qualms with Harry having ownership of the land due to his very relaxed relations he had experienced with the people so far. He had even picked up a bit of tribal magic that aided in his warding of the lands.

He had a planned meeting with both the Grangers and the Marauders, it seemed that Australia had no problems questioning Sirius using veritaserum and declaring him innocent of all charges filed by the British Ministry. Of course, the British Ministry had enough issues at the time to contest the ruling, and as a result the ruling had not been challenged and was now a matter of international fact.

Harry could still remember his first conversation with Hermione on his cell phone:

Harry glanced down at his cell phone and noted the number on the caller ID before he answered, "Hello?"

Hermione squealed into the phone, "Oh Harry, I never thought I'd hear your voice again."

Harry cracked a small smile, "It's good to hear from you too Hermione, but maybe a little more softly so I can understand what you're saying."

Hermione huffed, "Oh very well." A beat of silence followed before she continued in a more sedate tone, "So, when can I see you again?"

Harry softly replied, "I'm still working through some things due to my time in Azkaban. Once I get settled in at my new home, I'll even give you tickets so you can fly in the muggle way."

Hermione sighed, "Well, I talked to my parents and they've already accepted an offer to begin a practice in Australia. Apparently they've been thinking about moving for awhile now. I've filled out the transfer papers, and I start my seventh year at the Royal Academy of Magic in Sydney in two months. Thankfully, the OWL system is an international one, or I'm just certain I'd be way behind."

Harry chuckled as he listened to Hermione discuss the merits of the educational system before he cleared his throat, "As fascinating as that is, it does bring me to my next point. I've already hired tutors to get me to take my OWL and NEWT exams by the end of the year so I'll be plenty busy also. But, I'm leaving Christmas open, so if you'll be ready by then, we can discuss the specifics then."

Harry could picture Hermione's smile as she spoke quickly, "Oh, that will be perfect Harry. My parents were ever so worried they'd never see me once we got to Australia, but the Royal Academy is strictly for commuting students, and now we'll have until Christmas just to get reacquainted."

Harry smiled and added, "Remus and Sirius will be joining me then also, seems they've been working on a move to New Zealand, and apparently now that Sirius is free he has a lot more in terms of responsibility."

The rest of the conversation came back to catching up over the previous two years, at least from Hermione's perspective.

As Harry gazed out into the sunset he knew that this was merely the beginning, whether or not he wanted to see Voldemort again, he had a feeling the dark wizard would arrange a meeting. As time passed Harry vowed to make the meeting on his own terms for once, and when it happened the end of the dark lord would be final.

A/N: Ok folks this is going to be three chapters, and you've just finished the first chapter. Leave a review and tell me what you think of part one of this new little story, otherwise I'll turn Harry into a newt...

Disclaimer: It's JKR's world not mine, I would think that was obvious by now.

A/N: No newts were harmed in the writing of this chapter.

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Hermione slowly opened her eyes, blinking the sleep away as she fought for consciousness. As she gazed around the room she remembered her circumstances. The group had all converged on Harry's new home to celebrate Christmas and reconnect after two and a half years of being separated due to the corruption of the British Ministry of Magic.

The only problem was now that Harry's stint in Azkaban had changed him irrevocably, not only in terms of the way he now wielded magic, but also in terms of how he kept everyone since their arrival at an arms length. They had all talked about the directions their lives were heading, but Harry's plans always seemed so vague and disconnected as if his reactions to everything were well rehearsed without the favor of being genuine.

The old Hermione, the one who had pushed Harry to make up with Ron during the Tri-wizard tournament, was no longer the person she used to be. Of course two years of being somewhat friendless again had made her a littler harder to the realities oft Wizarding Britain. Now she just wanted Harry to move beyond his apparent emotional disconnect, but she wouldn't press him until he bent to her will. As she rolled out of her bed Hermione grabbed a change of clothes and planned on devising a plan to just be around Harry, hoping her proximity would be enough to open up her best friend.

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Harry turned his wand over in his hand as he gazed out into the clearing beyond his house. In one direction Harry could see acres and acres of wetlands and rainforests to the south, and if he were to spin around he would be able to see the beautiful blue water of the Arafura Sea. It was a rare day of sun during the lead up to the traditional wet season, and Harry planned on enjoying it as he prepared for a bit of a hike, and he was waiting to see if anyone would be up to joining him.

He reached down to sip his tea and he felt someone else approach, and he casually said, "Good morning."

Hermione walked softly up to her friend and smiled softly before taking the seat next to him, a position they would often take back in their days at Hogwarts. Harry poured her a cup of tea and she took it gratefully, blowing on the hot liquid before she commented, "It's a beautiful morning."

Harry merely nodded and replied, "If what the locals told me is true, we don't get many days like this once the wet season starts up. I was thinking of taking a bit of a hike into Kakadu while the weather holds up. According to the radio the real nasty weather starts rolling in the end of the week."

Hermione hummed her agreement before she took a sip of her tea, ever since agreeing to move to Australia she had read every book she could find about the country. Softly she commented, "Sirius, Remus, and Tonks already had plans, something about taking a portkey into Sydney. My mum and dad planned on relaxing today and staying around your house. But, if you don't mind I'd like to join you on the hike."

Harry smiled slightly and turned his gaze over to Hermione, she was already dressed by necessity for the humid weather, wearing khaki shorts and a cut-off t-shirt. While he wasn't staring unabashedly he could still clearly see the straps and sides of the bright blue bra she wore underneath. Off handed he mentioned, "You might want to grab some hiking boots then, otherwise you like fine."

Hermione rolled her eyes but smiled, "Glad to see I meet your standards then." Hermione looked over at Harry in return and noticed the tight t-shirt he wore and the pair of shorts he had on were similar in style to her own. Her friend had grown into a very fanciable young man, and she wondered once again at the cruelty of fate, not allowing Harry to deal with these changes like many other young people had.

Feeling impulsively protective of her friend she leaned over and gave him a peck on his cheek, prompting the small smile on his face to blossom and he blushed lightly, which pleased her for reasons she wasn't exactly sure of. Harry canted his head and asked, "What was that for?"

Hermione merely smiled as she reached over to grab a couple of pieces of toast, "You pack some food while I go get my boots, and I'll tell you when I get back."

As she stood and walked away from the table nibbling on a piece of toast Harry shook his head and sighed in bemusement, Dobby popped into place next to him, "Does Master Harry request Dobby make him and his Hermione friend some food for a picnic?"

Harry nodded slowly and replied, "That would be nice Dobby. Make sure you pack us plenty of fresh water also, and keep it under the cooling charm. After you're done feel free to take the rest of the day off, maybe work on some more of your art that you've been doing." Dobby bobbed his head rapidly before vanishing once again with a pop; Harry had grown rather fond of the little elf since he first arrived in Azkaban with food.

The more time he spent with Dobby the more parallels he saw between himself and the little elf. Shaken those thoughts off he finished off the rest of his tea stood from the table and did some light stretching in preparation for the hike.

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Hermione gazed at the ancient pictures of the Aborigines in awe, she had seen pictures of similar examples, but these rocks and the stories told by the drawings on them were distinctly magical in nature.

Harry stood close by and focused on the pictures, trying to derive some meaning from the story depicted before he softly murmured, "We make our own destiny."

Hermione turned to Harry in surprise, "What do you mean?"

Harry merely replied, "The story, it tells of a prophecy and a shaman who wasn't willing to follow the prophecy just for the sake of completing the prophecy. He found something greater to drive his journey; the fulfillment of the prophecy was merely a side effect of his journey."

Hermione nodded and leaned over into Harry, resting her head on his shoulder. She was just barely tall enough to manage the feat, and she was surprised when Harry's arm wrapped around her waist. The pictures were beautiful in both an aesthetic way, and it what they represented. She was happy she could share this with Harry, and all she knew was that it made her feel warm inside, and for now that was enough.

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Ron kicked at the loose thread on the throw rug in the parlor room at Grimmauld Place; in a way he felt the unraveling rug was an apt metaphor for his own life at this point. Hogwarts had been shut down due to the ever increasing threat of Voldemort, and the Professional Quidditch season had been postponed for the first time in over one hundred years. He had tried to contact the minister to arrange a meeting with Harry, but his mother had forbid him or Ginny from leaving the safe confines of Grimmauld Place.

Of course, safety was a relative thing at this point in time, with new deaths of secondary Order members being whispered about in the same breath as the death of new recruits from Voldemort. Instead all Ron and Ginny could manage to get were somewhat irregular reports from their older siblings. Even the twins were full fledged Order members, and they were often working on magical aids that would help the Order win the war. Gone were the completely carefree pranksters his brothers had once been, a certain feeling of serious thought had seeped into their very manner at this point.

Dumbledore had disappeared with Flitwick on some sort of a search for objects capable of defeating Voldemort, and that was all the more anyone knew. His father had also simply taken him aside one day and told him it was likely the ministry would fall very soon, and Scrimgeour's faction would likely be destroyed.

There was no training going on for those considered too young to fight in the war, although Ron imagined that had more to do with his mother than it being a rule the Order followed. He knew for certain that several other older Gryffindors beyond his family were involved in the resistance somehow.

As he kicked at the loose thread some more Ron wondered how Harry and Hermione were doing right now, if nothing else they

weren't trapped in a depressing house with nothing else to do other than live vicariously through the Order members allowed outside. Ron grunted and stood, maybe his mum had decided to bake up some cookies for the visiting Order members and he could sneak a couple without her noticing.

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Albus Dumbledore felt the great fatigue a normal wizard his age might feel just waking up and go about their typical day. Of course knowing his own relative abilities and strength it was more a testament to the seemingly endless challenges he and his colleague Filius Flitwick had found themselves in since taking up the quest to discover and destroy the remainder of the tethers that Tom Riddle had keeping him somewhat immortal.

Albus slowly shook the wrinkles from his robes and flicked his wand, the elder wand starting the water on the small range to boil. Another flick of his wand sent an alarm spell to wake Filius up. In their time over the last several months they had managed to destroy Ravenclaw's diadem, Hufflepuff's cup, Slytherin's locket, and Gaunt's Ring had been discovered the past day, but had yet to be destroyed. While he had no verification that Harry's scar horcrux was gone, he lacked the resources to do much about it.

Filius Flitwick limped out of his partition within the tent the only sound needed to detect his arrival the thump of his cane as he limped towards Dumbledore. "Good morning Albus, shall we dispatch with the final unattached piece of that monster's soul today?"

Dumbledore merely nodded as he sipped on his tea, he was well aware of the other powers of the ring and wanted to be rid of the temptation it possessed as quickly as possible. He considered himself a man with a strong constitution but some temptations were too great to be overcome with will alone.

Flitwick poured himself his own cup of tea and the only sounds for a few minutes were the slurps of two men who had no desire for perfect manners, and merely desired time to reflect.



After a few minutes Flitwick propped himself up using his cane and declared, "You put the wards up Albus, and I shall cast Fiendfyre on the ring this time."

Dumbledore acquiesced with a flick of his wand and he placed the ring on the now warded table. Without even sparing a moment Flitwick summoned the mystical flame with great precision and within a few minutes the entire ring, even the enchantments placed on the ring by death itself were gone, leaving a much more hopeful pair looking to the final step of their journey; The final duel with Tom Riddle, and the end of his reign of death and destruction.

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Harry slashed his wand violently and a purple flame erupted from his wand prompting one of his attackers to conjure a shield which gonged loudly when the curse hit it before it finally crumbled under the power of the spell. Another attacker sent a wave of conjured needles at Harry but he merely flicked his wand and rolled away as the needles turned into ping pong balls.

Next all three attackers concentrated spell fire on Harry as he wandlessly conjured a shield and sent a variety of curses back using his wand.

The exchange of spells continued until all three attackers had been effectively incapacitated in multiple ways each. Harry walked up to the three attackers and smirked before he asked, "So, are we done for the day yet?"

With a flick of his wand the attackers were unbound and mostly cured of their various afflictions, Sirius groaned at the large handlebar mustache he was currently sporting, and the variety of other aches he was currently sporting. Remus had to deal with having his feet switched with his hands, a fact which made grasping his own wand impossible as it hadn't gone along with his hand. Tonks, the cheerful bubbly auror Harry had met shortly before his fateful trial had become wrapped up in her clothes literally, and her metamorph abilities were providing no real relief from the torment.

Sirius finally managed to reverse the various spells on his person and groaned, "Merlin, give him his NEWT results, tell him he is the

strongest wizard in the world and how does he repay you? With endless torture through handlebar moustache."

Harry grinned unrepentantly, the months in Australia had lightened his demeanor considerably, of course dating Hermione and having to deal with weekly trips from the marauders to duel made life much more enjoyable.

Tonks sighed and used her power to reverse her shoulder joints, providing sufficient relief to cancel the spells on her clothes without going starkers like she had to a few weeks earlier. Taking pity on her boyfriend she cast the switching spell on Remus and he was once again able to take advantage of his opposable thumbs and fingers to make some choice gestures to Harry as he reversed the other spells on his person.

Tonks also added, "Wotcher, take away one piece of a dark lord's soul from the bloke and he suddenly develops a sense of humor."

Harry merely shook his head and walked back towards his house from the crude dueling area he had sketched out a few months earlier.

The three followed Harry into his house where Dobby had placed several glasses and a large pitcher of lemonade out for consumption along with a variety of fresh fruit.

Sirius was the next one inside and immediately grabbed a banana and began to munch before he commented to Harry, "I still don't understand why you feel the need to go back to Britain and deal with Voldemort."

Harry wagged his finger as Tonks and Remus closed the door behind them and quietly grabbed some food and drink and snapped back in reply, "I want that chapter of my life to be over before I think about moving on from fully from that island. If what you've heard from the Order members is right, Dumbledore and Flitwick have done all of the legwork dealing with the other soul pieces. It doesn't take a genius to guess that if Voldemort isn't killed sooner he'll come back to bite me in the ass later."

Sirius sighed but didn't disagree as Harry continued in a more sedate tone, "I promised myself when I left Britain last time that I

would never go back. But, with what I know now I need to deal with this last thing, and then I can wash my hands of the entire chapter in my life. I know Hermione would prefer I didn't bother, but I refuse to live a minute of my life looking over my shoulder and wondering if he could come after me. I'll burn out the real nut jobs in the death eater ranks, and then finish off Riddle once and for all. After that, then I can finally start living the life I want to without any of the taint that seems to follow me around."

No one else had anything to say to that and eventually the conversation moved on to safer areas, such as teasing Harry about his relationship with Hermione and threatening Sirius with a flea bath.

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Harry apparated from the large sailboat he had stowed away on over a day earlier, the boat was nearing the Hammersmith Bridge and his destination was a certain house held under the same Fidelius charm that Harry had experienced years earlier. Thankfully, even with Snape's apparent defection Sirius had informed Harry that Dumbledore had placed several contingencies on the Order's loyalty documents preventing the spy from returning or alluding to the location even if he desired to.

Opting for safety over expedience Harry made two shorter apparition jumps, taking care to use the cloaking spell to prevent detection from the puppet Ministry of Magic following Scrimgeour's apparent "retirement" two months earlier. It was just another reason why Harry had no interest to spend any longer in this country than was absolutely necessary. If an entire government could rise on the ideals of Voldemort, then it wasn't simply a problem that could be solved by killing the dark wizard and his most zealous followers.

With his second jump Harry popped right into the entrance room at Grimmauld Place and immediately had 5 different wands pointed at his person. With a negligent wave of his hand they all flew to his feet and he simply said, "I need to speak to Dumbledore."

The only individual Harry recognized was Bill Weasley, and that had been a relatively brief meeting five years earlier before they had made the trip to the Quidditch World Cup. Gone was the angry young man that had last visited here a few years back, instead this

was a tall and lean wizard who simply reeked of power and a subtle hint of menace.

Deciding to move things along he ordered, "Bill Weasley, send word along to whomever needs to hear it, but I expect an audience with Dumbledore within the hour."

A sandy haired wizard tried to protest but the others merely moved aside as Harry walked deeper into the dark building intent on finding a snack as he bided his time. He glanced around, noting that Mrs. Black's portrait was gone, and most of the darker objects he remembered had been replaced by more contemporary magical objects such as a Weird Sisters Poster.

As he prepared to move to the kitchen a red haired missile wrapped around him, noting the feel of two firm breasts squashed against his stomach he realized that at the very least Ginny Weasley was staying at the house, much as she had before.

Harry firmly pried her arms away and nodded, "Nice to see you too Ginny. I'm off to grab a spot to eat in the kitchen if you'd care to join me, you're more than welcome."

Ginny flushed red but smiled uncertainly as she stepped into line behind Harry, none-too-subtly checking him out as they moved along. Harry suppressed a smirk, it seemed some things hadn't really changed at all in the past four years, of course if Hermione was here, she might not take to the situation quite so kindly.

As he stepped into the kitchen another familiar face greeted him as Ron sat in a chair by the main table munching on a bag of crisps. His eyes widened comically taking in this new and improved Harry and he flowed to his feet and reached out with his hand. Harry pumped Ron's hand twice firmly before pulling his hand back, "Ron." He acknowledged before making over towards the conventional muggle refrigerator, an apparent concession to modern technology that someone had managed to rig to work.

Harry swung open the door and grabbed some sandwich materials and a can of muggle soda that had somehow found its way into Grimmauld Place. Quickly putting together a club sandwich with ample materials Harry dug into his first real food in over a day due to his need to travel incognito into Britain.

The youngest Weasleys didn't seem to exactly know what to say so they merely watched as Harry devoured the large sandwich and washed it down with his soda. As he finished he casually noted, "So, I see you didn't take me up on my offer."

Ron looked chagrined as Ginny just looked confused so Harry explained, "That letter I sent after I got out of Azkaban. It had instructions and an offer for your entire family to leave Britain to get free and clear of the war."

Ginny's mouth was open with shock at the revelation before Ron sheepishly replied, "Dumbledore took the letter away before I got a real good look at it, and mum told me not to mention it again."

Harry merely shrugged in response and stood to take care of his dishes before scrounging for something else to eat as he waited. Ron's story had confirmed his suspicions and while he didn't blame his old friend, on the same tangent, it wasn't an offer that would be repeated.

The door to the kitchen swung open and Harry didn't need to turn from where he was looking for food to know who had just arrived.

In a very cool tone he greeted the new arrival, "Hello Dumbledore."

A/N: You had to know that the chapter was going to end there, didn't you?

In answer to some of the reviews I will say this about the story. These characters are meant to be somewhat more likable than their canon counterparts, yes even Dumbledore. I'd like to think the scene with Flitwick shows Dumbledore in a much more positive light than he ended with in canon. Of course, in my opinion DH had numerous plot holes, and by the end of the book there wasn't a single character I really and truly liked.

Next chapter you will begin to see why the title of the story is Dark Recompense, and you'll see that Harry isn't nearly as light hearted as he might have appeared in this chapter.

Thanks to all of the numerous reviewers, and while Harry isn't a newt yet...I make no guarantees what his animagus form might end up being, but newt is still a possibility...

Disclaimer: It's JKR's world not mine, I would think that obvious at this point.

A/N: The much desired Dumbledore and Harry confrontations. Next chapter is Harry at the ministry, and the little epilogue tacked on.

\*The technical term for the Australian Embassy in London is the High Commission, and you will see it used in this chapter.

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Dumbledore calmly replied to his less than warm greeting, "I must admit surprise at your appearance Harry. I had been operating under the assumption that you had set foot on British soil for the last time."

Harry turned slowly and eyed the ancient and tired looking wizard before he replied, "Merlin, the last few years haven't done any favors to you Dumbledore." Glancing over at Ron and Ginny, who were squirming, Harry added, "Perhaps somewhere with a bit more privacy, don't you agree Dumbledore?"

Dumbledore merely nodded and spun around gesturing with his hand for Harry to follow as they walked out of the kitchen and up the stairs to a very secure looking meeting room of some sort. The door closed behind Harry with a wave of his hand and Dumbledore crooked any eyebrow before casting numerous rare and unknown privacy charms on the room before the two wizards took the empty seats in the room.

Dumbledore calmly asked, "What would you like to discuss Harry?"

Harry crooked his eyebrow, a facial gesture made all the more meaningful now that he no longer had to wear glasses. "Several things come to mind Dumbledore, but most importantly, do you where Riddle is located?"

Dumbledore hemmed the affirmative, "It is rather common knowledge that Tom prefers to hold court in one of two locations. He is either at Azkaban working with his legions of dark creatures, or he is in the Minister of Magic's office, the current puppet minister is a wizard by the name of Pius Thicknesse."

Harry pinched his chin between his thumb and index finger in thought before he asked, "Any idea what sort of security details that follow him?"

Dumbledore shrugged, "He is always followed around by a variety of upper level and lower level death eaters or imperius conscripts."

Harry frowned thoughtfully, "What sort of force does he have at Azkaban?"

Dumbledore smiled wryly, "It should please you to know that the dementors have taken a much more pragmatic stance in the war after your earlier display while imprisoned. They have merely continued to guard the prisoners in place and have yet to administer a kiss to a prisoner of war, at least that I am aware of. With no dementors he has been forced to recruit more heavily in the vampire and werewolf populations. Estimates place the force at approximately 10 vampires and 50 magically inclined werewolves."

Harry shook his head in exasperation, "60 sadistic magical creatures and his death eaters were all it took to roll this country on its back like a terrified turtle."

Dumbledore looked at Harry with mild disapproval and finally he snapped, "Don't think I didn't catch your little crack about my stay at Azkaban. If you were half the wizard you claim to be you never would have been outmaneuvered by Cornelius Fudge and Umbridge in the first place."

Dumbledore gazed back placidly, "You are of course correct, and if it soothes you to do so I will allow you to vent your rage on me."

Harry snorted and shook his head, "That little passive-aggressive act you put on might have worked on me 4 years ago old man, but it won't work now."

Dumbledore replied, "I have no idea what you mean Harry."

Harry shook his head, "I've had all of these wonderfully painful things I would have liked to confront you with, but now that I see you again it's finally making sense."

Dumbledore looked at Harry in curiosity, "Oh?"



Harry crooked a smirk, "Despite your age, and all of the fake wisdom you spew out you're terrified that someone will expose you for the wizard you truly are, and when people look back on you after you're gone they'll remember you for how you actually were and not the image of the benign old wizard you like to portray."

Dumbledore didn't reply so Harry continued, "Everything you've done or said has always been about how it affects you and your perfectly organized little world. I've read up on how you dealt with Grindewald, and yet when I compare the modus operandi between the two of you, it both ends up with your own self serving versions of the greater good."

Dumbledore's nose twitched and Harry shook his head sadly, "That's it, isn't it? I'm sure you had your reasons for ending up like you did, but in the end you chose the life you've led, even if you've told yourself in those moments of doubt that you had no choice."

Shaking his head Harry rose to his feet and cancelled all of the wards with a flick of his wand, "I'll be in contact with you through Grimmauld throughout the rest of the week. Keep your eyes and ears open, I plan to bring this all to an end quickly."

Dumbledore protested as the door swing open, "You lack the skills to take on Tom and his army Harry, please allow the Order to fight the war as we have been."

Harry shook his head and kept walking out of the door, he had a couple of meetings to attend at the Australian High Commission.

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The non-descript fishing boat bobbed around in the North Sea, the muggle fishermen aboard had been paid handsomely to merely drive their boat out to these coordinates and wait around here for an hour before heading back to port.

Harry had stowed away again, although this time he was in essence paying for the ride, as he waited with his bag of magical weapons, preparing to wipe the menace of Azkaban Island off of the map forever. While Britain lagged behind the rest of the magical world in

several aspects, Harry had to admit that having less destructive weapons was one good aspect of the country.

Other more advanced magical countries had devastating weapons at their disposal which typically prevented dark wizards from taking hold like they did routinely in Britain. The bomb he carried with him right now was specifically designed to deal with similar problems, with a powerful enemy in a heavily fortified position. Even magically resistant and near immortal creatures like vampires would be vaporized by the magical equivalent of a hydrogen bomb.

Harry continued to fly just over the surface of the water; even though he was disillusioned it limited any chance of detection. He could see Azkaban Island and the fortress like prison, and he was under strict direction to place the bomb on a secure place on the shore of the island before activating the countdown sequence as he flew away at high speed to prevent being caught in the blast radius.

Harry closed in on the island and as he gazed around was relieved to see no guards patrolling the outer edges of the island. Thinking of how Sirius swam to shore from the island Harry shook his head in amazement at the feat. While they were only five miles off the coast the water was surely frigid, and five miles in conditions like the ones he flew over would be very difficult to manage in a boat let alone swimming as a dog.

With stealth Harry placed the bomb and uttered the activation phrase, giving him twenty minutes to get outside the one mile blast radius. Mounting his broom, Harry zipped away from the island at a much quicker pace, still flying low, but without the fear of being detected he had dealt with earlier.

Within minutes Harry was once again boarding the boat and he waited patiently before the great magical explosion could be seen by his eyes only in the distance. Harry sighed in relief as one stronghold of Voldemort's army had been completely removed from the board.

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Harry shook his head as he walked out of the Australian High Commission building in London, while these particular politicians had been extremely helpful, they were still politicians.

It had been his own stroke of genius to involve the ICW special taskforce in his plans for returning to Britain. Due to a variety of factors, namely the horcrux hunt, Dumbledore had been forced to resign his own commission meaning the full scope Harry's plans would remain mostly secret.

As Harry walked down the near deserted side street he spotted a secluded alleyway from which to make his second and final jump to Grimmauld Place. He had a feeling he was about to get an earful from a few members of the Order of the Phoenix and in a strange way he was looking forward to it.

With a soft pop and a slight squeezing sensation Harry disappeared from the alley and popped back into the entrance hallway of Grimmauld Place. This time only one wand was pointed at him, and once again it was the anonymous sandy haired wizard from his first visit. This time Harry merely reached out and popped the wizard's elbow awkwardly, a soft pop was all that could be heard as the wand went clattering to the ground.

"You are very fortunate sir that I do not plan on visiting this place ever again, because I do not take kindly to people shoving their wands in my face." Harry commented plainly as he made a beeline for the kitchen, hopeful about making another giant sandwich.

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Lord Voldemort could not believe what his messenger had just said so he hissed in a dangerous tone, "What do you mean Azkaban has been destroyed?"

The non-descript deatheater began to answer until his master hissed, "Avada Kedavra." The green light enveloped the wizard before he slumped to the ground, another negligent flick of the wand vanished the body before the Dark Lord looked to those he held at least some small measure of trust in.

He turned to his various Lieutenants and asked, "Is this true Lucius?"

Lucius Malfoy bowed his head, "There have been no reports in over 10 hours from Azkaban my lord. It does explain why there would be such a discrepancy."

Voldemort narrowed his eyes before he turned to another in the room, "What of our numbers were present at Azkaban Severuss?"

Severus Snape replied in a silky tone, "All 60 members of your dark creature brigade my lord. Additionally, there was the usual contingent of 10 guarding the dementors."

Voldemort spun away from the others and stared out of the enchanted window in the minister's office, it was a typical London day it seemed, gray and drizzling, which seemed to perfectly match his mood at the moment. The loss in the grand scheme of things was a sizable one to his forces, and he would be sure to increase the guard contingent at the ministry to prevent something similar from happening at his crown jewel. As he silently seethed he wondered just who had the audacity to oppose him in such a manner; surely not that fool Dumbledore, he valued human life too much.

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Harry finished off the last bite of the massive turkey club sandwich he had constructed, sipping on another muggle soda as he waited for Dumbledore to arrive again. This time the only person brave enough to remain in the kitchen as he ate was a strange blonde haired girl that had introduced herself as Luna Lovegood.

Dumbledore slowly entered the kitchen again and he looked refreshed compared to their previous meeting, but he had an aggrieved look on his face, and Harry didn't even need to guess why it was there.

Harry sighed and stood from his seat, "It was a pleasure meeting you Luna, now if you'll excuse me Dumbledore needs to explain right and wrong to me again."

Luna giggled and replied, "The white bumblebee works in mysterious ways, just like the lead bellied fizz whimper."

Harry rolled his eyes with a small smile but followed Dumbledore up the stairs to their previous meeting room.

The pair took their seats, trading the necessary privacy spells like last time before Dumbledore started right off, "Harry, I did not divulge the information on Tom's followers just so you could simply destroy them using violent and terrible magics."

Harry looked at Dumbledore blandly before he drawled, "Right, of course I should just come to visit for my own good health. After all, why would we want to defeat Voldemort? It's not like he is a homicidal power mad dictator who kills anyone in his way and not fitting his definition of fitness."

Dumbledore frowned deeply, "Your cynicism does not do you credit Harry, there were 10 witches and wizards on that island that were completely redeemable."

Harry snorted, "Redeemable like Snape you mean? You are such a hypocrite, righteous when it serves your ego and a bastard when no one is watching."

Dumbledore shook his head sadly before Harry raised his hand to silence to old wizard, "No, I think I've been quite reasonable about catering to your feelings of inadequacy as it pertains to Tom Riddle."

Harry stood and glared at Dumbledore, "Your negligence allowed the moron to rise to power, and with his rise to power you've completely decimated the magical population of this country. All of the truly good families served your banner under the guise of being the light side, but it isn't really the light you serve, no you merely serve your own ego and beliefs that are contrary to how the world actually operates."

Harry slammed his fist on the desk jarring Dumbledore as he continued, "Your ego has destroyed what was once a great and just country where blood purity wasn't nearly the issue it has become in the last 60 years. I know, I've read the history books from other countries, and while you have prestige for dealing with Grindewald you do not command the respect internationally that you do here."

Dumbledore shook his head, "You must release this hatred you carry with you Harry or you shall go down the same path as Tom did fifty years ago."

Harry looked at Dumbledore with disgust before he wandlessly slammed the door open and cancelled the silencing charm, "You will die alone Dumbledore with no respect, no adulation, no friends, and by the time I've finished telling the true story of Albus Dumbledore no one will remember you as anything more than a bumbling blood purist who hid behind the guise of a great wizard."

Harry swiftly exited the office, not caring to see the looks Dumbledore was giving him any longer than necessary. As he reached the base of the stairs Molly Weasley waited for him, her hands balled into fists resting on her hips with a stern expression on her face.

Molly demanded, "Why are you raising your voice to the headmaster young man, you should respect a wizard of his stature."

Harry's voice blanked at this and he replied in a pleasant tone of voice, "There was a time that I wanted nothing more than to be a member of your family Mrs. Weasley. That letter I sent Ron was my offer to your family to regain that level of trust once more. But, you didn't really think of it that way, did you? No, it was merely another chance to dominate your children and alienate the two you still have left. Well, consider my offer rescinded to you Mrs. Weasley, because respect and love aren't something you can pick and choose to give when it strikes your fancy."

Glancing over at Ron and Ginny he added, "If you ever want to visit me in the future you merely need to send a letter to the Muggle office for the Australian High Commission in London."

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In New York City the International Confederation of Wizards had their headquarters, and for the first time in fifty years the enforcement arm of the organization was being extended to the British Isles.

David Stewart now held the office of Supreme Mugwump of the organization, and while he lacked all of the fanfare that his

predecessor Albus Dumbledore had, he had a keen political mind and would not let a monster like Voldemort thrive on his watch. It had come as a pleasant surprise when Harry Potter had put out some feelers in regards to dealing with the Voldemort problem a few months back.

The best trainers had been sent to Australia and Harry Potter had distinguished himself during that testing period, enough so that he would be sent into Britain without any real back up, aside from the magical weapons that would be provided to eradicate a certain pest problem.

His assistant bustled into the office and handed him a decode message from the Australian High Commission in London, this would be the first word he received from Potter, and he was eager to read what progress had been made. With a flick of his wand followed by a mumbled code word the jumbled text shifted into a coherent message:

Mr. Stewart,

First target, Azkaban Prison confirmed complete destruction of Voldemort dark creatures legion and any lingering death eaters. Approximated head count of 70. Next target British Ministry of Magic, request aid from Obliviators to prevent exposure risk. Next attack planned within 48 hours, will contact upon final success.

H.J.P

Stewart sat the letter down with trembling hands, the news was very good, and yet he still felt empty at the senseless loss of life. Thankfully the psych evaluators for Potter had cleared the young man for this type of work, and while he wouldn't completely eliminate future aid, Potter had stated he had no further plans for killing following his time in Britain. In the face of this order of destruction, Stewart could only pray for Potter's sake it would end at that.

A/N: Well, this one was a bit shorter due to the fact that I want to save the Voldemort meeting/confrontation to the end, and by now you should have some idea of what methods Harry will use to finish the threat once and for all. To you Luna lovers, only a small cameo but I hope it will suffice.

Thanks for all of the reviews, and if you keep up the good work reviewing I will reveal Harry's animagus form in the epilogue...



Disclaimer: It's JKR's world not mine, so any autograph requests will be forwarded thusly...

A/N: Here it is the grand finale, and I hope it will meet your aesthetic and mental requirements.

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It had been a full day since his 'talk' with Dumbledore and Harry had been extremely busy making preparations for the destruction of the ministry, and thusly the tipping of the initial domino which would lead to the end of blood purity being an issue in Britain. It was merely a bonus at this point that Riddle would be within the building as it was vaporized.

Due to the fact that the ministry was located in the middle of London a smaller yield bomb was to be used, and even then Harry had been placing muggle repelling wards throughout the area to prevent any collateral damage. The office above had been cleared out under the guise of a gas leak, and the surrounding buildings had been dealt with similarly. Blueprints of the ministry building had been researched heavily and the spot for placement of the bomb had been selected very carefully to maximize destruction of the ministry proper, but prevent damage to the surrounding buildings.

Harry watched the entrance of the ministry under the protection of his invisibility cloak; the phone booth entrance had been replaced by the use of an entrance more similar to that of Diagon Alley. The first floor of the office building had a stairway was a large flat wall at the base. Someone had already placed a muggle repelling ward on the outside that kept curious eyes away, and it was a simple matter of tapping the proper bricks with the wand to gain entry.

A particularly large group lurched into the room and Harry decided to make his move, sliding in behind the group and following them into the entrance. He felt the presence of several wards even through his cloak, but he was unafraid of detection due to true history of the heirloom he was aware of, the cloak which could hide from death itself. Another of the little details Dumbledore had conveniently forgotten, of course Sirius had been the one to explain some Potter family history to him, and a little more research into arcane magical history had led him to his present knowledge.

A particularly fat faced wizard walked up to the two who apparently acted as security, "Well let's get on with it then. Some of us actually have to work for a living you sod."

Harry smirked as the two wizards went to work leaving the way clear as he simply walked into the atrium of the ministry, spotting the large statue which still proclaimed the brotherhood of magical beings or some such nonsense. His next step involved doing random department checks for imperius conscripts and portkeying them to safety if at all possible.

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David Stewart was waiting; it wasn't the sort of waiting that one could sit around and relax during either. No, he sat in his seat fidgeting like a 9 year old with too much sugar in their diet, hoping that Harry Potter could clean the one real global threat that existed presently in the magical world from the map. There were several ICW obliation, construction, and peace keeping experts just waiting for the word to signal their entrance into Britain to begin the clean up process.

Potter would receive all of the highest honors possible, but it wouldn't be made into a media spectacle, the young man had stated he had enough fame already without adding to it. In fact, Stewart had finally agreed that the awards would be given anonymously with special notations made that if the recipient ever wished the awards to be made public all he had to do was ask.

Deciding that he couldn't simply sit still for the indeterminate future Stewart stood and walked over to his dart board on the other side of his office. A picture of Albus Dumbledore served as the background with several holes indicating that it had been used for some time. It was an interminable wait, but by the time the day was through hopefully it would all be well worth it.

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Harry felt faintly ill as he finished his random checks for the imperius curse victims. He had checked at least 20 witches and wizards from every department in the building save for the Department of Mysteries, it had taken over 3 hours, and he had found 2 people in the entire building being compelled to be here. They had been given

portkeys to a safe house and Harry said a little prayer in the hopes that he didn't miss someone who was not guilty.

The bomb was to be placed just outside of the Minister of Magic's office, meaning that Harry's next stop was in to the very heart of the Lion's den. Carefully he navigated through the building, avoiding all the trap wards and patrols he came across. A few familiar faces flashed through his field of vision, but none that were shocking in their presence and he finally reached the final corridor a feeling of anticipation filled his very being.

A few half formed plans were already bubbling in his mind, the more creative one was winning as opposed to the blood filled one, he felt no desire to have any more blood on his hands than necessary, and personal or grudge attacks would be to the contrary of that wish.

Using the most passive magic he could think of, a magical ping of sorts was sent out by Harry signifying the number of magic users in a small amount of area and their relative strengths. The return seemed to indicate Voldemort and four others were in the room. With care Harry began to inscribe intricate and alien looking runes around the doorway, the results of which would affect a time dilation of sorts for everyone inside the room. For every one second inside the room one minute passed in the outside world, until the bomb he was already placing eradicated everything within the specified area.

The ward activated just as Harry started the smart bomb into its final countdown session, giving him 20 minutes to exit the ministry and move free of the explosion. Opening the door with a wave of his hand Harry scanned the room seeing the effects of the ward for the first time with his eyes; it was a very peculiar sight. Voldemort sat behind the desk looking as serpentine as their last meeting, Delores Umbridge, Severus Snape, Lucius Malfoy, and a squat looking wizard that Harry assumed was Pius Thicknesse.

For the final time Harry reached out with his Legilimency skills checking the Puppet Minister for traces of the Imperius curse. With his cursory scan he could find no traces of the curse and if the man had once been under the curse he had since accepted his role in Voldemort's army.

Shaking his head Harry closed the door with a wave of his hand well before any in the room would even notice it had happened on

anything more than a subconscious level. The entire scan had taken roughly fifteen seconds.

Harry took off at a fast walk heading towards the exit with as much care and swiftness he could manage all at once. As he passed the DMLE office he idly noticed some confusion about an apparent ward malfunction. While the master wards had detected Harry's ward, they had not been able to detect its location and its purpose due to the hard to define nature of the ward.

As he reached the atrium Harry breathed a quiet sigh of relief and continued towards the entrance/exit of the building. With the influx and outflow of any government building Harry was free and clear of the building watching in somewhat perverse amusement as those he followed out were immediately captured by ICW supplemental forces.

Harry moved out of sight range and removed his cloak, balling it up and placing it in the backpack he still had on. Reaching into an insulated pocket he removed the cell phone he had for just this specific instance. Dialing the number he had been instructed an anxious voice asked, "This is Stewart."

Harry glanced at his watch and confirmed, "We are at t-minus five minutes until confirmation, and the baby has been placed in the cradle. Repeat baby is in the cradle and the babysitter is watching it from a front row seat, confirmed."

The voice on the other line exhaled a great breath of air and confirmed, "I copy, and I very much look forward to the end of this particular nightmare. Your bird is waiting at Heathrow as we discussed, you can stay around for the fireworks or beat the show."

Harry rubbed at his eyes and replied, "I need to see this through as this point sir, but as soon as I copy a detonation I am leaving the place before it takes any more of my soul."

The silence on the other end was stifling and Harry hung up before he bared any more of his soul to the head of the ICW. Five minutes later the building which housed the Ministry of Magic was obliterated from the inside, the dark wizard known as Lord Voldemort would never terrorize an innocent ever again, likewise the Britain Magical community would long be recovering from the depravities of those helming the pureblood supremacy movement.

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## Epilogue – 18 months later

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Harry's personal beach was filled with the sounds of laughter and happiness on a sunny and hot summer day. The smell of grilled beef and hamburgers also filled the air as Harry and the most important people to him were celebrating Hermione successfully completing her masteries in Magical History and Transfiguration.

The world at large had been hectic for many months following the end of Lord Voldemort and his army of followers. The official ICW story had claimed a magical explosion due to experiments conducted in the Department of Mysteries had been the cause, but a private ceremony in the United States had given Harry his due credit with an International Order of Valor that was stipulated to be made public if Harry ever desired it.

It took a few months of therapy for Harry to find peace in the actions he had been forced to take, and ultimately he had accepted the words he had been telling his heart ever since he first made plans to deal with Britain on his own terms.

Harry flipped the burgers and steaks on the grill and smiled as Sirius dumped his girlfriend Sarah into the water before she repaid him in kind when she pulled him down into the water. Remus and Tonks were rolling a beach ball with their toddler son Teddy, clapping their hands when he tried to grasp the ball. Hermione meanwhile was sunning on the beach a few feet away, her tiny red bikini was constantly drawing his attention away from everything else much to her amusement if the smirk on her face could be attributed.

With some deft flipping of his grill tools Harry called out, "Food's ready people, if you don't hurry Dobby will eat it all." Laughs could be heard all over as Harry glanced over at his little friend who merely shrugged unrepentant in his love of hamburgers.

The group all settled around the large handcrafted picnic table, Harry had taken to working with wood of many kinds as a hobby

when he wasn't leading hikes as a tour guide to the nearby National Parks.

The group dug into the food and Harry glanced around smiling slightly as he took in his family, it seemed as though his life had finally come full circle. He had a brief period he couldn't remember where he was loved and free to live his life, even if that amounted to his latest filled diaper and laughing at his parents or silly uncles. Then fate intervened and took that happiness away, and while he admitted that Hogwarts was better than the Dursleys for the most part, he still was tangled in the same web that had taken his parents away. Azkaban had focused him on the way the world worked when simple actions like empathy and understanding were not nearly common enough in the magical world. Instead it forced Harry to plan ahead, finding ways to make his plans work, and his biggest plan was finding a way to be happy and in control of his own life.

Finally, he made it to Australia and discovered that glimmer of peace and happiness he had long sought, even at a time when he didn't know what that meant. Now, he was loved, healthy, and he had exorcised those demons of the past, and it had been an extremely formative experience.

Reaching over he took Hermione's free hand and kissed her upturned palm, smiling warmly at his fiancé, life had given him bitter disappointments, but when he repaid them with his own brand of dark recompense he discovered a universal truth. We all control our own destinies when it comes down to it, and as he bathed in the laughter and smiles of the day he considered it a truth well learned.

A/N: Well there it is, maybe a little shorter and a little lighter than many of you may have expected, but short of going through Harry's therapy sessions, that was unavoidable. Thanks for following along on the ride, and I'll be seeing you around when I write something worth reading again.

Also, this is for a few reviewers that wanted to see Harry's animagus form...

Omake:

Harry felt a nervous sort of anticipation as he gazed down at the animagus revealing potion, Remus and Sirius had been teasing him

for days that his form would probably be something like an Orangutan.

Taking the goblet of potion Harry closed his eyes and took a sip of the noxious fluid, looking hopefully as Remus and Sirius watched him eagerly. In a way it felt like he had taken polyjuice potion, his body struggling to change even though it was not designed to do so.

Harry felt himself shrink onto the table top, but suddenly it seemed like the world was strangely shaped and the air carried scents and sounds he had never noticed before.

Remus and Sirius shared a look before Remus opened a nearby book thumbing through it with practiced ease, smirking he looked over and said, "Well Padfoot, it looks like we turned him into a Newt."

Sirius barked a laugh as he looked down at his godson who was twitching his tail in experimentation, arching his eyebrow after a moment of thought he replied, "He'll get better."

Harry gazed up as the pair broke out into laughter before the potion began to wear off and he began to shift back to his human form. He excitedly asked, "So, what was I?"

He would be disappointed as Remus and Sirius flopped to the floor and rolled around in laughter, only at a later time Harry would decide to obliviate the pair of that specific memory, some things just weren't worth dealing with the pair.

So there you have, I turned him into a Newt...but, he got better.